

a symphony orchestra. Contrast the violin. Although this instrument can be played solo, the vast majority of violinists earn their living playing in string ensembles in orchestras. This contrast between solo and group activity has its counterpart in the world of sport, where swimmers and runners are more likely to be homosexual than baseball and hockey players. Like all such generalizations, this one has exceptions. Nonetheless, gay musicians and athletes seem more drawn to individual performance than to team participation.

Many contemporary gay pianists and organists, for understandable professional reasons, have chosen to keep their sexual orientation private. This is not the case with the great Russian virtuoso Vladimir Horowitz (1904–), who has not objected to Glenn Plaskin's frank biography of 1983. A child prodigy, Horowitz' homosexuality became evident in his early maturity in Russia and Germany. In the 1930s the pianist came under the influence of the charismatic Arturo Toscanini, who encouraged him to marry his daughter Wanda. Despite the husband's resort to psychoanalysis, the marriage proved troubled, and Wanda objected to Horowitz' close relationships with a series of young men. The pianist's temperament became legendary: he would cancel concerts at the shortest notice, sometimes apparently in order to complete a sexual rendezvous. In the 1970s, responding to New York's upscale version of the counterculture, Horowitz became more gregarious, and his sexual tastes became widely known. Accompanied by his lover, the aging pianist essayed frequent trips to gay bars and clubs.

Less clear is the instance of the distinguished harpsichordist Wanda Landowska (1877–1959), who revolutionized the aesthetics of baroque music. Her companion seems to have been lesbian, but Landowska's own orientation is uncertain.

There is one exception to the solo-group contrast. Homosexuality has

long been particularly decried in the field of conducting, where the role seems to call for macho assertiveness. Nonetheless, the Greek conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos (1896–1960) quietly defied the ban, at the same time taking risks in championing avant-garde music. His protégé, Leonard Bernstein (1918–) has broken the mold altogether, insisting on his right to live openly as a gay man. Active also as a composer and educator, Bernstein has probably also attained the status of the most successful conductor of all time—certainly the wealthiest. His achievement is a beacon of light to countless young musicians.

See also Music, Popular; Opera; Punk Rock.

Wayne R. Dynes

MYSTERY AND DETECTIVE FICTION

The impression that homosexual and lesbian characters and situations are rare in mystery and detective fiction is true for earlier decades, but not for more recent ones. Lesbian characters can be found in some British mysteries of the late 1920s, including Dorothy L. Sayers' *Unnatural Death* and *Strong Poison*, and gay male characters began to appear in the next decade. In most of the early fiction, however, the homosexual characters are incidental, often introduced to complicate the plot.

The "Hard-Boiled" Novel and After. Gay male characters begin to appear in the work of those American writers classified as "hard-boiled" because sexuality of all sorts along with drugs, alcohol, and violence were displayed without moralizing in these naturalistic novels. The first examples is in Rex Stout's 1933 novel *Forest Fire*. The protagonist is a macho forest ranger who is sexually attracted to a summer helper. Stout then proceeded to the Nero Wolfe novels where homosexuality seems sublimated in misogyny, gourmet meals, and cultivating orchids. More

typical of the hard-boiled school treatment of gay men is the work of three of its leading practitioners, James Cain, Ross Macdonald, and Raymond Chandler. Gays are effeminate (often cross-dressers) and unhappy. Cain's *Serenade* features a bisexual hero and a homosexual villain who is killed in the end. Chandler's *The Big Sleep* and Macdonald's *Dark Tunnel* include weak and psychologically impaired gay men, but the extreme examples of effeminate gay men and masculine women occur in the works of Mickey Spillane, especially *I, the Jury*.

About the only exception to these negative views in the earlier detective fiction are three excellent whodunits by Gore Vidal, written under the pseudonym of Edgar Box. *Death in the Fifth Position* (1952) includes the first attractive gay men in mystery fiction and also includes some realistic pictures of the gay subculture. However, other works of the 1950s such as Margaret Millar's *Beast in View*, Meyer Levin's *Compulsion*, and Anne Hocking's *A Simple Way of Poison* show the influence of psychoanalytic ideas of homosexuality as an illness that can lead the unbalanced individual into murder.

The number of homosexual characters in mystery fiction grew enormously in the 1960s, and the picture was slightly less negative. Lou Rand's *Rough Trade* is an early example of a novel with a gay detective and a gay setting published for a gay readership. George Baxt's three Pharaoh Love novels reached a general audience. Love was a black gay detective and the novels included other gay characters and pictures of the gay subculture presented in a comparatively positive manner. Several novels by Patricia Highsmith in the fifties and the sixties including *Strangers on Train* and *The Talented Mr. Ripley* include gay men as their main characters, but the homosexuality is so cunningly described that it was often avoided by those who did not care to see it. However, in most mysteries homosexual men and lesbians were still pictured as

emotionally deformed killers and villains. Such works as Ellery Queen's *The Last Woman in His Life* and Roderick Thorp's *The Detective* are examples.

After Gay Liberation. After the advent of the modern American gay liberation movement, there was a radical change. Joseph Hansen had written his first gay mystery novel, *Known Homosexual*, in 1968, but in 1970 he published *Fadeout* featuring David Brandstetter, a gay detective in Los Angeles drawn in the hard-boiled tradition of Phillip Marlowe and Lew Archer. The enormous success of the work led to a series numbering about ten novels as of 1987. Within a few years there were also excellent whodunits published by openly gay writers Richard Hall (*Butterscotch Prince*) and John Paul Hudson (*Superstar Murder*). These works depicted the gay subcultures of New York and Los Angeles as well as any fiction of the time, in addition to being excellent representatives of the mystery genre. A popular novelist who was less gay identified, James Kirkwood, Jr., published the successful *P.S. Your Cat is Dead* in 1972. The novel had a gay man as a protagonist. At the end of the decade Felice Picano utilized the secret agent concept in *The Lure*, and Paul Monette recreated the secret panels and hidden caves of older adventure novels in the brilliant satire of Hollywood, *The Gold Diggers*, all within a highly professional whodunit.

The success of these works led to an explosion of mystery fiction featuring gay characters and settings in the 1980s. At least three writers followed Hansen's plan of a whodunit series featuring the same gay detective. Richard Stevenson's Don Strachey novels are set in Albany, New York; Nathan Aldyne's Daniel Valentine books take place in Boston and Provincetown, and Tony Fennely's Matt Sinclair novels utilize a New Orleans background. All these whodunits present an accurate picture of the gay subculture in the area and a range of gay characters. Probably intended for a mainly gay audi-

ence, they are all such good examples of the genre that they reach a much broader cross-section of readers. Many other mysteries intended for gay audiences (usually of a far less professional character) have appeared. Gay and lesbian characters are also much more prominent in the general mystery fiction of the two decades after 1970 in both the United States and Britain, their numbers far too numerous to mention. Such well known authors as Ian Fleming, Ngaio Marsh, Ruth Rendell, Josephine Tey, John MacDonald, and Amanda Cross have included both lesbian and gay characters in their novels. In most cases the gay characters are far more well-rounded and emotionally balanced individuals than those created in earlier decades.

The success of mystery novels with gay male detectives has also led to an increase in novels with lesbian characters and at least one series with a lesbian detective. Three novels by Heron Carvic published between 1968 and 1971 featuring Miss Seeton as the detective have lesbian characters, as do three mysteries by Peter Dickinson published between 1972 and 1976, and three well-received works of P. D. James published between 1971 and 1980, including *Death of an Expert Witness*. The well known mystery novelist Robert Parker wrote about lesbian characters and the lesbian subculture in his 1980 work *Looking for Rachel Wallace*. In the early 1980s, Vicki P. McConnell started a series of whodunit novels featuring the lesbian detective Nyla Wade.

See also *Novels and Short Fiction*.

James B. Levin

MYTHOLOGY, CLASSICAL

The concept of mythology in Greek civilization refers not merely to the gods, but to the demigods as well—the heroes renowned in song and story. Nineteenth-century German scholars, reversing the formula that “God created man in his image,” held that man had created the gods in his own image, endowing them

with his attributes and passions. Since *paiderasteia* was institutionalized in Greek civilization, boy-loving gods and heroes figure prominently in Greek mythology, in contrast with the suppression of the homoerotic theme in the Judeo-Christian scriptures.

The Loves of the Gods. Zeus, the father of the gods, is renowned principally for his love of the Phrygian boy **Ganymede**, the fairest of mortals, whom the god carried off to make him his cup-bearer. By the time of **Pindar** Ganymede is enshrined as the *eromenos*, the beloved boy of his heavenly patron. In earlier myth Ganymede is abducted by a whirlwind, but from the fourth century B.C. onward he is seized by Zeus in the form of an eagle. This later became a common theme of literature and art, despite the unlikelihood that an eagle could carry an adolescent boy in its talons. The name Ganymede was also extended in time to any handsome boy with a male lover and protector. Moreover, Ganymede never ages; he is the mythical embodiment of the *puer aeternus*, the pederast’s dream of the beloved lingering forever in the prime of his adolescent beauty. Another theme that appears in the following centuries is the rivalry of Ganymede and Hera, which suggests that in the Greek household the *eromenos* and the wife could find themselves competing for the husband’s favors. Ultimately the opposition served for debates over the merits of homosexuality (boy-love) and heterosexuality (woman-love). By contrast, Zeus has no heavenly mistress; his amorous adventures with mortal women are conducted solely on earth.

The pederastic affairs of the other gods, while mentioned sporadically in classical literature, never attained the celebrity of Zeus’ passion for Ganymede. However, Poseidon, according to Pindar, preceded Zeus in loving Pelops, the son of Tantalus, the ancestor of the Atrides. Tradition had it that his father cut the boy into pieces and served him to the gods, but only Demeter, famished and distraught,